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Item 141 of the preliminary list*
Joint Inspection Unit

Joint Inspection Unit

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with article 9, paragraph 2, of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the work programme of the Unit for 2001 and the preliminary listing of potential reports for 2002 and beyond (see annex).

* A/56/50.

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Annex

Programme of work of the Joint Inspection Unit for 2001 and preliminary listing of potential reports for 2002 and beyond

I. Introduction

1. The following work programme has been drawn up in accordance with article 9, paragraph 1, of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit, contained in the annex to General Assembly resolution 31/192 of 22 December 1976. It takes into account the guidelines laid out in successive Assembly resolutions on the functioning of the Unit, in particular resolution 50/233 of 7 June 1996 and 54/16 of 29 October 1999. Section II of the present annex contains the programme of work of the Unit for 2001 and section III, a preliminary listing of potential reports for 2002 and beyond which includes potential subjects the Unit has identified to be dealt with after the completion of the ongoing reports. As hitherto, the programme of work is subject to change in the course of the year: new reports may be added; planned reports may be modified, postponed or cancelled when circumstances so warrant; and titles may be changed to reflect the new thrust of reports.

2. In the context of its programme of work for 2001, the Joint Inspection Unit has planned to undertake 13 new reports and 1 note on subjects for inspections, evaluations and/or investigations in the areas of administration and management, technical cooperation and peace operations.

3. In addition, the actual workload of the Joint Inspection Unit for 2001 includes 11 reports and 2 notes carried over from its previous programmes of work.

4. In 2000, upon a suggestion by the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the Joint Inspection Unit decided to add a report entitled "Review of management and administration in the International Telecommunication Union" which is in the process of completion. During the same period, the Unit decided to temporarily postpone the preparation of its report entitled "Planning, programming, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation in the United Nations system: learning from best practices" until the Secretary-General presents a detailed analysis of the information, management control and evaluation system required to implement the proposal contained in the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on results-based budgeting, which will be submitted in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003, in response to Assembly resolution 55/231 of 23 December 2000.

5. The Joint Inspection Unit would highly appreciate receiving any comments from the legislative organs of the participating organizations on the preliminary listing of potential reports for 2002 and beyond, as well as their specific requests for consideration by the Inspectors in due course.

II. Work programme for 2001

A. Management audit review of outsourcing in the United Nations and the United Nations funds and programmes

6. The General Assembly has approved four basic reasons for outsourcing, namely, (a) to acquire technical skills not readily available in the Organization; (b) to achieve cost savings; (c) to provide a source more effectively, efficiently or expeditiously and (d) to provide services not needed on a long-term basis. In addition, the Secretary-General has, at the request of the Assembly, established criteria for deciding which activities and services should or should not be outsourced. In its resolution 55/232 of 23 December 2000, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General, inter alia, to report on the progress of the implementation of the above-mentioned provisions and to provide information on activities outsourced during the years 1999-2000. The Assembly further requested the Joint Inspection Unit to conduct a management audit review of outsourcing in the United Nations and the United Nations funds and programmes in accordance with existing practice and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session. It will be recalled that, in 1997, the Joint Inspection Unit issued a report entitled "The challenge of outsourcing

for the United Nations system" (JIU/REP/97/5) (see A/52/338).

B. United Nations system revenue-producing activities: income generation and cost recovery

7. This subject, which was included in the preliminary listing of potential studies for 2001 and beyond (see A/54/960), was suggested by the Office of Internal Oversight Services and several participating organizations which would like to improve the profitability of their existing revenue-producing activities and explore new avenues of income generation to relieve financial constraints. The report will review existing policies within the United Nations system relating to revenue-producing activities in general and commercial ventures more particularly. It will seek to improve, where necessary, the management and profitability of such activities. It is also intended to look into potential revenue streams that might be compatible with the special mission and character of United Nations system organizations.

C. Evaluation of United Nations Volunteers

8. The General Assembly established the United Nations Volunteers programme in 1970 to serve as an operational partner in development cooperation at the request of United Nations Member States. More than 20,000 volunteers from some 150 countries have, over the years, served in some 140 countries. The year 2001 has been proclaimed by the Assembly the International Year of Volunteers and it provides an opportunity not only to celebrate past successes but also to formulate plans for the future. In this respect, the Joint Inspection Unit has decided to evaluate the programme, in particular from its administrative and management structures and methods, with a view to recommending those improvements that would be thought necessary to ensure the most efficient and optimum use of the programme's resources.

D. Post structures and types of appointments in the United Nations system

9. The secretariat of the World Health Organization (WHO) has suggested that the Joint Inspection Unit undertake a system-wide review of human resources management and reform initiatives. Since such an undertaking would be much too broad in scope, the Unit decided to follow a step-by-step approach and, in the first instance, to review the question of post structures and types of appointments used by the various organizations of the system.

10. The purpose of the report will be to take stock of the current situation and of current initiatives being taken by various organizations to reform their practices with a view to making recommendations aimed at harmonizing criteria and achieving greater coordination among organizations, taking duly into account their specific missions, mandates and features.

E. Implementation of multilingualism in the agencies of the United Nations system

11. On the occasion of the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Charter of the United Nations, the General Assembly adopted resolution 50/11 of 2 November 1995 on multilingualism, whereby it recalled that "the universality of the United Nations and its corollary, multilingualism, entail for each State Member of the Organization, irrespective of the official language in which it expresses itself, the right and the duty to make itself understood and to understand others". The Assembly also emphasized "the importance of providing access for all Governments and all sectors of civil society to the organization's documentation, archives and data banks in all the official languages". It requested the Secretary-General "to ensure the strict implementation of the resolutions establishing language arrangements for both the official languages and the working languages of the Secretariat", and invited Member States to do likewise.

12. The report on multilingualism has been included in the work programme of the Joint Inspection Unit for 2001 upon the suggestion of the secretariats of the World Health Organization and the United Nations.

Despite clear policy decisions from the respective governing bodies calling for an improved multilingual working environment and access to United Nations system information, the practice in many organizations lags behind policy for different reasons. Apart from publications and official documentation, the system-wide development of web sites has added to the challenge of providing material in all official and working languages on an equal basis.

13. The Joint Inspection Unit has dealt in the past with a related subject in its report on "The implications of additional languages in the United Nations system" (JIU/REP/77/5) (see A/32/237). The issue has also been on the agendas of different governing bodies in recent years. The objectives of the current review by the Unit are (a) to assess applicable policy guidelines in the United Nations system; (b) to identify constraints, administrative, financial or otherwise, which may have a bearing on the strict implementation of multilingualism, as well as best practices in overcoming them; and (c) to make recommendations thereon.

F. Comparative analysis of the headquarters agreements entered into by the organizations of the United Nations system

14. Issues related to host country agreements are of continuous interest for States Members of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency. As an example, by resolution 2819 (XXVI) of 15 December 1971, the General Assembly established the Committee on Relations with the Host Country. The Committee has submitted a number of reports to the Assembly, which in turn has adopted resolutions based on the Committee's reports. The report of the Joint Inspection Unit will tie in a number of issues which were addressed in previous reports of the Unit, such as, most recently, the report on the management of buildings (JIU/REP/2001/1). In effect, the Unit intends to deliver a comparative analysis of selected topics covered by the host country agreements entered into by the organizations of the United Nations system. The report will identify areas where adjustments might be advisable and develop some thoughts which could serve as a basis for model rules for future host country agreements. The thrust of the report will be to optimize the terms of host country agreements to the mutual benefit of the organizations and their host countries, thus contributing to efforts to improve overall efficiency.

G. Contribution to the methodology of the definition of objectives on the basis of selected economic and social affairs programmes of the United Nations

15. Despite the considerable progress made over the years in the planning, programming and budgeting of the United Nations, Member States recognize the need to further enhance the design of programme objectives in the context of the medium-term plan and in the programme budget as a key element of results-based budgeting (see General Assembly resolution 55/231 of 23 December 2000).

16. It is obvious that, in order to give Member States a possibility to monitor progress and evaluate results, it will be necessary to arrive at an accurate description of the state of affairs at the beginning of the programming cycle and a clear and realistic indication of achievable results at its end.

17. The Joint Inspection Unit will, on the basis of selected economic and social programmes of the United Nations, examine whether such expectations can be met in view of the very different nature of the various programmes and make specific recommendations accordingly.

H. Follow-up on the implementation of the recommendations contained in reports of the Joint Inspection Unit on United Nations system support for science and technology in Africa (JIU/REP/94/1) and in Asia and the Pacific (JIU/REP/95/7)

18. The Unit decided to include this subject in its work programme for 2001 pursuant to article 12 of its statute which states the following:

> "Executive heads of organizations shall ensure that recommendations of the Unit approved by their respective competent organs are implemented as expeditiously as possible. Such implementation may be subject to

verification by the competent organs of the organizations, which may also request the Unit to issue follow-up reports. The Unit may also prepare such reports on its own initiative."

19. The proposed report is being prepared on the initiative of the Joint Inspection Unit as part of its new follow-up system, which has been endorsed by the General Assembly. This follow-up system seeks to track and report on actions taken on the Unit's recommendations by the competent legislative organs and the secretariats of the participating organizations.

20. In line with the foregoing, the follow-up report on the subject of science and technology will assess the degree to which the organizations have so far implemented the recommendations contained in the Unit's two reports under review following a time lapse of just over five years since the reports were issued in the mid-1990s. The process of verifying implementation will also take into account major developments within the United Nations system in the field of science and technology which are relevant to the recommendations of the two reports in question.

I. Involvement of civil society organizations in technical cooperation projects with selected entities of the United Nations system

21. Increased economic cooperation on an international scale has facilitated the participation of different actors in the common effort towards development. Among them, civil society has been called upon to play an important role, as recognized, inter alia, in the Millennium Declaration call "to give greater opportunities to the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society ... to contribute to the realization of the Organization's goals and programmes". Along the same lines, the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Renewing the United Nations: a programme for reform" (A/51/950, para. 60) stated that the Secretary-General was "making arrangements for all United Nations entities to be open to and work closely with civil society organizations ... and to facilitate increased consultation and cooperation between the United Nations and such organizations."

22. Against this background, the Joint Inspection Unit has accepted a suggestion by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to review the involvement of civil society in its cooperation with the United Nations system. It is worth recalling that the Unit has already issued reports on the involvement of both non-governmental organizations (JIU/REP/93/1 and JIU/REP/96/4) and the private sector (JIU/REP/99/6).

23. By assessing experiences and best practices in a selected number of specialized agencies, programmes and funds of the United Nations, the present report aims: to draw a profile of civil society as a partner of the United Nations system; to identify areas of technical cooperation activities in which it is already engaged and explore the potentiality of that engagement; to review existing guidelines of selected United Nations system organizations to ascertain the extent to which they reach out to civil society as partners and to explore the possibility of harmonizing them; and to examine the compliance of civil society organizations with the requirements of accountability and principles of the United Nations.

J. Evaluation of the optical disk system in the United Nations

24. The Joint Inspection Unit has been at the source of the establishment of the optical disk system, through its reports JIU/REP/86/9 entitled "Problems of storage and its costs in organizations of the United Nations system" (see A/41/806) and JIU/REP/89/11 entitled "From the optical disk pilot project at UNOG to an optical disk system for the United Nations" (see A/44/684). The two main purposes of the optical disk system were to establish electronic storage of United Nations documents and the capacity for their simultaneous retrieval in all official languages. In its resolution 44/201 B of 21 December 1989, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to implement the optical disk system project, which became fully operational in 1993.

25. In the report JIU/REP/89/11 mentioned above, the Inspectors also recommended that "the legislative bodies of the United Nations system [might] wish to consider installing optical disk systems of their own, using the results of the United Nations Office at Geneva pilot project, and ensuring the most cost-effective and compatible configuration". In the report on implementation of the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit (A/52/206), the Secretary-General suggested that, "instead of establishing their own

individual systems, the agencies could consider utilizing an upgraded common United Nations system-wide ODS located in New York and Geneva as the present system is."

26. The optical disk system has been implemented only at the United Nations, where a tremendous increase in the number of users and in the volume of data stored has severely strained a system based on a technology almost 10 years old. A re-engineered optical disk system is expected to replace the current system by June 2001. It would thus be timely for the Joint Inspection Unit to evaluate the implementation of the optical disk system and its future, in the light of the Secretary-General's vision of an "electronic United Nations", and taking into account the need for an improved United Nations system-wide access to documents in a more user-friendly manner.

K. Use of management information systems: lessons learned from the experience of organizations in the United Nations system

27. Owing to rapid developments of information and communication technologies, organization-wide management information systems have become an indispensable tool for strategic and results-based management of financial, human and information resources. Currently, many United Nations system organizations are developing and implementing management information systems through trial and error. There is a generally accepted understanding that design and implementation of useful and cost-efficient management information systems are not easy tasks, which requires effective system-wide cooperation. In addition, implementation of management information systems is usually costly. It is therefore important to facilitate inter-agency cooperation for effective, efficient and economically viable development of management information systems. The concern to address such a system-wide cross-cutting management issue has also been expressed recently at the regular session of the Administrative Committee on Coordination held in October 2000 (see ACC/2000/20, para. 35).

28. In the proposed report, the Inspectors will provide a comparative analysis of major management information systems in United Nations system organizations, and will draw lessons from their practice and experience. The report will focus on those key management issues relating to management information systems, such as costs, financing and functionality and the supporting organizational structure, as well as implications for internal operating processes.

L. Peace operations: review of the Field Service category of personnel

29. The Field Service category of personnel was developed in the 1950s and was specifically designed for peacekeeping operations. However, changes that have occurred in the nature of peacekeeping operations during the five decades since the inception of the Field Service category have not been matched by corresponding changes in its composition and functions. Therefore, a review by the Joint Inspection Unit of this category of personnel is believed to be timely, as stated in the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305-S/2000/809) and related reports of the Secretary-General (in particular A/55/502). By examining the objectives, staffing and functioning of the Field Service, the study will focus, among other things, on: (a) a review of the rules, regulations and procedures governing the recruitment and management of Field Service personnel; (b) an analysis of the current staffing of the Field Service and the profile of current incumbents of its posts and (c) an analysis of the current needs of peace operations for a core of administrative and technical civilian personnel.

M. Technical cooperation projects and their end-beneficiaries: selected case studies

30. Technical cooperation projects have been, through the years, an important and concrete manifestation of the support that organizations of the United Nations system provide for developing countries to build and enhance their national and regional capacities for development. However, the need to ensure that the potential of successful technical cooperation projects is fully explored to the benefit of the end-beneficiaries should be a constant objective for the United Nations system.

31. Originally proposed by the International Atomic Energy Agency, the objective of the report is to identify problems and opportunities for the United Nations system, as well as possible ways for stronger collaboration among United Nations organizations with the aim of maximizing the benefits for the end-beneficiaries.

32. The report will focus on a few projects, as case studies, executed by United Nations organizations in the area of water resources with special emphasis on the participation and involvement of the targeted communities as end-beneficiaries of the selected projects.

III. Preliminary listing of potential reports for 2002 and beyond

33. The following are indications of subjects that the Inspectors have identified for potential reports to be prepared during the course of 2002 and beyond. The list is tentative and does not necessarily imply that the Joint Inspection Unit is committed to taking up these subjects:

(a) Review of the financial situation in the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East;

(b) Review of management and administration in the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations;

(c) Evaluation of international drug control activities in the United Nations system;

(d) Comparative study of standards of accommodation, travel time and rest stopovers with a view to harmonizing policies throughout the United Nations system;

(e) Study in selected countries of the state of implementation of the strategy for providing primary education for all by 2015;

(f) Review of the structure of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations;

(g) Practice of donors attaching conditions to special-purpose contributions;

(h) Planning, programming, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation in the United Nations system: learning from best practices;

(i) The impact of zero-nominal-growth budgets on the programmes of the specialized agencies of the United Nations;

(j) Comprehensive review of a specific peace operation.

IV. Notes

34. According to article 11, paragraph 5 of its statute, the Joint Inspection Unit produces notes submitted to the executive heads for use by them as they may decide. In this regard, the Unit plans to issue the following notes:

(a) Handling of Joint Inspection Unit reports by the United Nations Population Fund (2001);

(b) Handling of Joint Inspection Unit reports by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2002).

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Item 179 of the preliminary list*
Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Fifty-sixth year

Letter dated 4 June 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to draw your attention to a devastating terror attack which occurred this past Friday evening, 1 June 2001, in the heart of Tel-Aviv.

Shortly after 11.30 p.m. (local time), a Palestinian suicide bomber blew himself up in the middle of a crowd of teenagers waiting outside a popular Tel-Aviv nightclub. Twenty Israelis — all but 5 of them teenagers — were killed in this heinous massacre, and over 90 others were wounded. Among those killed were two sisters, aged 18 and 16.

Friday's bombing is the single worst act of terrorism committed since the outbreak of violence last September and is one of the deadliest attacks in recent years. Moreover, the attack comes during a period in which Israel is refraining from launching any military actions against Palestinian targets in the hope that this policy of restraint, enacted pursuant to the release of the report of the Mitchell Committee, will serve to restore calm and quiet.

I should like to recall my previous letters detailing the ongoing Palestinian terrorist campaign against Israel, dated 30 May 2001 (A/56/81-S/2001/540), 25 May 2001 (A/56/80-S/2001/524), 18 May 2001 (A/56/78-S/2001/506), 11 May 2001 (A/56/72-S/2001/473), 9 May 2001 (A/56/69-S/2001/459), 1 May 2001 (A/55/924-S/2001/435), 23 April 2001 (A/55/910-S/2001/396), 16 April 2001 (A/55/901-S/2001/364), 28 March 2001 (A/55/863-S/2001/291), 27 March 2001 (A/55/860-S/2001/280), 26 March 2001 (A/55/858-S/2001/278), 19 March 2001 (A/55/842-S/2001/244), 5 March 2001 (A/55/821-S/2001/193), 2 March 2001 (A/55/819-S/2001/187), 14 February 2001 (A/55/787-S/2001/137), 13 February 2001 (A/55/781-S/2001/132), 2 February 2001 (A/55/762-S/2001/103), 25 January 2001 (A/55/748-S/2001/81), 23 January 2001 (A/55/742-S/2001/71), 28 December 2000 (A/55/719-S/2000/1252), 22 November 2000 (A/55/641-S/2000/1114),

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20 November 2000 (A/55/634-S/2000/1108), and 2 November 2000 (A/55/540-S/2000/1065).

Israel holds the Palestinian Authority responsible for this and all prior terrorist attacks in light of its encouragement of, incitement to, and even direct participation in violence. Since the outbreak of violence in late September, the Palestinian leadership has released scores of convicted terrorist prisoners and avoided taking any action to control violence. In doing so, the Palestinian Authority and its Chairman have created a terror coalition for the perpetration of indiscriminate terrorist attacks against Israel.

Despite the persistence of terror attacks, and the particularly gruesome carnage of Friday's attack, Israel is continuing to exercise tremendous restraint in order to provide the Palestinian leadership with a window of opportunity in which to fulfil its obligations to control violence and terror. Israel takes note of Chairman Arafat's call for an unconditional ceasefire but is mindful that such statements must be followed by concerted and discernible actions on the ground.

Israel calls upon the Palestinian leadership to abide by its commitment of 9 September 1993, to renounce violence and terror and implement a complete and unconditional ceasefire. Israel further calls upon the international community to make clear that terrorism is an abominable and unacceptable practice, regardless of its declared motives, and that those who engage in, or lend their support to, terrorist activity will be fought by the community of nations.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly under item 179 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**
Permanent Representative

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United Nations A/56/86–E/2001/79

General Assembly
Economic and Social Council

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General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session
Item 12 of the preliminary list*
Report of the Economic and Social Council

Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2001
2-27 July 2001
Items 4 and 13 (k) of the provisional agenda**

Coordination of the policies and activities of the specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system related to the following theme: the role of the United Nations in promoting development, particularly with respect to access to and transfer of knowledge and technology, especially information and communication technologies, inter alia, through partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including the private sector

Economic and environmental questions: public administration and development

Letter dated 1 June 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit the findings and recommendations of the Third Global Forum: Fostering Democracy and Development through e-Government, held in Naples from 15 to 17 March 2001 (see annex). The Forum was organized by the Government of Italy, with the support of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under item 12 of the substantive session of 2001 of the Economic and Social Council, under items 4 and 13 (k) of the provisional agenda.

(*Signed*) Sergio **Vento**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/56/50.
** E/2001/100.

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Annex to the letter dated 1 June 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

THIRD GLOBAL FORUM
FOSTERING DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT
THROUGH e-GOVERNMENT
NAPLES, 15-17 MARCH 2001

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At the invitation of the Italian government, representatives of 122 countries, including many ministers, the multilateral agencies, the business community and non governmental organisations came together in Naples at the Third Global Forum. The Forum recorded its appreciation of this unprecedented opportunity to debate and explore the potentials of ICT for government in both developed and developing countries and their capacity to foster democracy and development.

More than 900 international experts and practitioners contributed to a wide ranging debate which highlighted the key challenges facing governments in the design and implementation of e-government strategies to meet the expectations and demands of their citizens for more accessible, transparent and accountable government.

The debate centred on the following six themes:

- Governance issues in the on line era
- ICT impact on the organisation of government
- Implementing e-government
- Services to citizens
- Services to business
- Digital divide and international co-operation

The findings and conclusions reached set a challenging agenda for future work.

Main findings

The Forum recognised the power of ICT to **transform the way in which governments work**. This is most evident in the case of the delivery of services and access to information. Many examples were offered of governments creating greater accessibility to services and improving the ways to provide quicker and more certain results. E-government can consistently improve the quality of life for citizens and can create a sharp reduction of costs and time. Such savings could be "invested " in more active forms of citizenship.

In other areas, such as **strengthening decision-making and policy formation**, it was noted that ICT had the potential to integrate data and facts in a more structured and comprehensive form through better knowledge management. Moreover, it was recognised that the quality of data itself will improve through better collection and analysis. ICT would also facilitate information sharing and the involvement of experts as well as broadening the basis on

which governments seek to identify and reconcile conflicting interests and goals. A major benefit of ICT lies in its capacity to involve citizens and civil society in the policy debate through direct interaction.

ICTs bring deep changes in the content of work and administrative organization. They force the reengineering of the administration in a way which meets citizens' needs. Wider information sharing at all levels of government often makes hierarchical relationships unnecessary.

A number of speakers stressed the importance of these potential developments for the strengthening of governance, the framework within which governments bind themselves to act in the interests of their citizens and to promote their well-being. At the core of good governance lie the principles of **accountability and transparency**. It was agreed that **nothing is more powerful in combating corruption than conducting transactions openly** and with public knowledge of the rules and criteria to be applied. This is not only important at the national and regional level but locally also, in relation to the transactions between the citizen and the state, whether the issue of permits, the collection of taxes or the receipt of benefits. Through its ability to spread accurate and comprehensive information, to automate processes and to provide a record of each transaction, ICT can be a powerful tool for good governance.

It was generally recognised that these benefits are not only potentially available to the developed world but are **a key factor in the development process**. Experience has demonstrated the **value of ICT in improving services even for the most disadvantaged communities**. And the ability to communicate quickly can reduce the sense of isolation of remote areas and contribute to their economic development. But for these benefits to be realised, the developing world needs access to technology, lower costs of access and the training to use it effectively. Otherwise the digital divide would lead to an ever-widening gap. This must not be allowed to happen. That is why initiatives such as the dot.force and other parallel activities are of such importance.

The need to reorient policies for international cooperation and development was recognised by many parties. Actions to ensure that the primary needs of survival are met remain paramount, but basic education and ICT development appear to have become the second and third top priority. The latter is reasonably inexpensive to implement, does not consume large quantities of energy and respects the environment. This development should be addressed to enable developing countries to make full use of technological resources and to boost autonomous, self-sustained processes of development and growth.

Although there was a large element of consensus that ICT in government could have widespread and beneficial results, the Forum insisted that **risks to privacy and security must be addressed**. The new technology must be used for the benefit of citizens not against them. Public servants must not only be trained to use ICT effectively, but they must do so in a culture, which respects the rights of citizens within a framework of good governance.

Nevertheless, **advanced technologies and adequate systems engineering are able to offer stronger guarantees in security and privacy**. They can also allow the effective control of

the use made of personal and sensitive data by the citizen. These guarantees are safer and more secure than the traditional ones.

Finally, it was also recognised that the full potential of ICT has yet to be realised even in the more advanced economies. And the implications for new forms of democracy and active citizenship are vast.

Key points

Discussions in plenary sessions and workshops led to the following conclusions:

Delivering better services

- New electronic means of accessing public information and of delivering public services facilitate a *peer-to-peer* relationship between State and citizen and between State and business. In this new relation of "equals", the *client-provider* system is no longer the administration that controls the citizens, but rather the opposite.
- Thus, citizens are not the recipients, but the co-deciders in e-government systems: public services have to be citizen- and customer-oriented.
- ICT projects for citizens and businesses can only work if the end-users are involved in their development. Cooperation and consultation are key tools of participation in this new democratic process.
- Improved accessibility requires well-constructed portals, simple navigation and user-friendly design.
- ICT offers the possibility of tailoring services to individual needs and 24 hours a day/7 days a week response.
- Services need to be redesigned to achieve the full potential of the application of ICT and be offered through the best provider.
- The barriers of geography and social exclusion can be overcome by new technology and enhanced service arrangements.
- There are two sides to the ICT coin: they further enable globalisation and access to the world, but they are nonetheless rooted at the local level and they may contribute to strengthening social bonds and building communities of concern.

Transforming government

- ICT requires investment in people rather than just technology. Effective human resource management to attract new skills and achieve cultural change is an essential component of successful ICT projects.
- E-government will eventually transform the processes and structures of government to create an administration that is less hierarchical and empowers civil servants to serve citizens better and to be more responsive to their needs.
- In order to benefit fully from the availability of new ICT tools, governments need to undertake a simultaneous cultural change in their civil service, including exploiting the potential of home and tele-working to achieve equal opportunities and greater productivity.

- Decision-making can be strengthened through better sharing of information and more consultation, both within government and externally, with civil society.
- ICT will have an impact on the way parliaments function by opening up possibility of a wider debate with citizens.
- Transparency of government action must be enhanced by exploiting all the possibilities offered by ICTs which allow the monitoring of public activities, the reduction of corruption and the enhancement of citizens' trust and their ability to intervene.
- In developing countries, e-government can reduce economic and social gaps, but in such contexts a particularly strong public action is needed to guide the process, and avoid an exclusively "business approach".
- A priority problem is the development of infrastructures to allow access to ICT and education of the population.

Guaranteeing privacy and security

- E-government creates expectations and anxiety, which need to be actively managed by governments. Citizens will reject e-government unless protection of their personal data and the security of their transactions is guaranteed.
- Protecting citizens is a duty of governments: therefore, regulatory frameworks should enforce this protection and specific advanced technologies should be adopted so as to guarantee absolute privacy, security and safety to users.

Bridging the digital divide

- The digital divide within countries and between them is the result of the broader social and economic divide, which is not only widening but also becoming increasingly unbalanced. Thus, policies for bridging the digital divide cannot substitute for interventions in the basic fields of education and health care, but should complement and reinforce them, in a new holistic vision of development assistance.
- ICTs are not a goal *per se*, but can be a very powerful and a relatively cheap tool to help reduce and eliminate these other divides. If well managed ICT can effectively assist in the achievement of sustainable socio-economic development, by empowering individuals and societies and fostering institutional capacity building. Thus, projects for development should include ICT to the maximum possible extent.
- The huge potential for development that lies in the ICTs is not yet adequately reflected in development policies from donor countries and international organisations. Broader awareness in this field is necessary, also through high profile international initiatives like the Naples Global Forum.
- Infrastructure is only one part of the digital divide; multi-level human capacity building is no less important to extract the full potential value of ICT for development, and to manage information. ICT should be incorporated in general education and professional courses, as well as in specific initiatives for raising the awareness of government officials, teachers, doctors and business people in developing countries.
- The needs of developing countries as far as digital divide is concerned are quite diverse in each country or region. They should be addressed by having a clear picture of them, with initiatives supported by strong local political commitment, a sustainable agenda and a synergetic approach profiting from partnerships with national and international NGOs and

the private sector. Thus, National ICT readiness assessment and action plans are encouraged, as well as the creation of National ICT Council in which political leadership should be deeply engaged, in partnership with local and international NGOs, the private sector, the international institutions and the donor countries.

- E-government, as demonstrated by many significant examples during the Naples Global Forum, must be given serious consideration also in the developing countries not only for its potential for stronger institutional capacity building, for delivering better services to citizens and business (thus increasing local social and economic development), for reducing corruption by increasing transparency and social control, but also for "showing the way" to the civil and business society. Thus, the exchange of experiences and the sharing of best practices, also in a South-South co-operation framework, as occurred during the Naples Global Forum and the Naples seminars.
- The creation of a light but effective regulatory framework in the developing countries is vital for attracting investments and protecting ICT users. Developed countries and international organisations should provide advise and know-how to developing countries in the field of better regulation.
- Public-private partnership is considered a good avenue at both national and international level for harnessing the potentials of ICT for development. Thus, initiatives based on this new approach, such as the G8 dot.force and the UN ICT task force are encouraged.

Managing for success

- Strategies based on an overall vision and a clear timetable are an essential requirement for success.
- Strategies should not only be based on governments' requirements, but take into account the interests and needs of citizens, parliaments and civil society.
- Full and comprehensive assessment of risk is essential in managing large scale IT investments.
- Sharing experiences, building on best practice and learning from mistakes increases the prospects of success and diminishes the risk of failure. Adapting successful models speeds implementation and reduces costs.
- Citizens need to be educated about the potential of new technologies. Government has a role to play in achieving a cultural shift in improving society's use of new technologies, given proper legal and consumer protection.

Recommendations

The following actions and policy options are strongly encouraged by the participants to the Third Global Forum of Naples:

- Multiply occasions for international best practices sharing and mutual learning on e-government issues;

- E-government action plans must be built in partnership with private sector, consumers and non profit organisations, having specific consideration for equal opportunities and the principle of subsidiarity;

- Special consideration must be paid to the gender divide and equal opportunities when designing e-government initiatives;

- Attention must be paid to the needs of disabled and elderly people when building websites and projecting electronically delivered services;

- Citizens' privacy must be considered of paramount importance and broader use made of the existing technologies for protecting personal data and to avoid malpractice;

- Establish a *peer-to-peer e*-relationship between State and citizen, and between State and business, when a public service is delivered electronically, also in order to improve accountability, transparency and trust;

- Redesign and not merely adjust processes when introducing ICT in government;

- Extending the electronic delivery of public services to all the population, including the "Internet – illiterate" by means of, e.g., smart cards, Internet kiosks …

- Favour the creation of websites for comparing the best examples of e-government and portals to provide advice and training for e-government implementation for both developed and developing countries;

- Foster the setting up of international standards for technical requirements of digital documents;

- That the OECD, taking into account the findings of the Naples Global Forum, contribute through its future work programme to the deepening of understanding of the potential and implications of e-government and sharing the results as widely as possible. Moreover, OECD could study tools for a high quality regulatory framework in e-government related matters;

- That the G8 dot.force stresses, in its report, the importance of: ICT for development and for fighting poverty; need for specific ICT action plans for each country or group of countries; ICT policies' need for a strong political commitment and of partnership with private sector and NGOs; need for light but effective regulatory framework in order to attract investment and protect privacy of users; human capital enhancement, knowledge-sharing and South-South cooperation;

- Support for UN Secretary-General action for ICT for development initiatives (UN ICT task force) and underline the need for coordination with other international initiatives;

- Favouring common training initiatives for civil servants in ICTs for governments;

- Naples seminars for developing countries on e-government, based on peer sharing and practical education on ICT tools, are considered a good example to be replicated; appreciation is expressed on the announcement that these international seminars will be repeated on an annual basis in Italy;

- Fostering regional poles for e-government training based on strong public, private and NGOs partnership;

- Fostering indigenous knowledge, local languages and preservation of local cultures by means of ICT.

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Item 37 of the preliminary list*
United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations

Letter dated 1 June 2001 from the Permanent Representatives of Lithuania and Poland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to recall the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) General Conference resolution 31 of 17 November 1999, which endorsed the terms of proclaiming the year 2001 as the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations, welcoming "the collective endeavour of the international community to enhance understanding through constructive dialogue among civilizations on the threshold of the third millennium". It also recognized "the importance of the values embodied in the resolution, such as the importance in international relations and the significant role of dialogue as a means of reaching understanding, removing threats to peace and strengthening interaction and exchange among civilizations".

In the spirit of the above-mentioned UNESCO resolution, the International Conference on the Dialogue among Civilizations was held in Vilnius, Lithuania, from 24 to 26 April 2001, under the joint auspices of H.E. Mr. Valdas Adamkus, President of the Republic of Lithuania, H.E. Mr. Aleksander Kwasniewski, President of the Republic of Poland, and H.E. Mr. Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO.

We have the honour to transmit the text of the Vilnius Declaration, which was adopted during the aforementioned Conference (see annex), and would be grateful if the text of this letter and its annex were distributed as an official document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under item 37 of the preliminary list.

(*Signed*) Dr. Gediminas **Šerkšnys**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Lithuania to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Janusz **Stanczyk**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Poland to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 1 June 2001 from the Permanent Representatives of Lithuania and Poland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Vilnius Declaration

1. Civilizations are entities of faith, historical memory, moral imagination and human connection. They contain historically unique and self-asserting cultures, irreplaceable forms of human creativity, and also the intellectual and moral sensibilities of large groups of people. Biodiversity and cultural diversity are closely linked and are instrumental for the ability of humankind to adapt, create and invent. No civilization can solely assume the responsibility for all humanity; neither can a single civilization claim exclusive rights to provide an ultimate and universally valid vision of how to be a human being in the complex and multifaceted world of today and tomorrow. Like human beings, the historically formed and living civilizations can never be interchangeable since they are all equally unique and valuable. The loss of any single trait of one civilization is a loss for all humanity.

2. The ideas of tolerance and of the dialogue among civilizations rest on a clear awareness of human incompleteness. This is particularly true of the concept of "the polylogue of civilizations" elaborated by Vytautas Kavolis, a great Lithuanian scholar.

3. Up to now the political exploitation of the concept of civilizations has been among the most problematic traits of modern social sciences and humanities. Regrettably, the theoretically exhausted and morally dubious inclination to employ or even exceedingly exploit the concept of civilization for sheer political and ideological purposes is still the case.

4. Simplistic, monologue-based or otherwise politically convenient notions of civilization should not be applied. Contrary to a firm conviction that Western civilization was the only civilization nurtured by dialogue-based individualism, liberty and toleration, scholars have stressed the importance of each civilization and the dialogue among them as an inescapable part of the concept of civilization itself.

5. Civilizations are symbolic designs within which people raise core questions concerning their being in the world, and also search for key concepts and frames of meaning to interpret themselves and the world around them. No civilization can be regarded as a theory-emanating entity solely capable of interpreting the world and therefore framing the rest of the world as its empirical evidence. Genuine dialogue allows no room for absolute otherness, for it occurs among morally committed human individuals.

6. No civilization can assume or represent complete humanity. The comparative approach therefore brings us to a proper understanding of the complementarity of civilizations. It powerfully stands against bias, clichés, demonization of the other and the sense of superiority over other societies and cultures. The complementarity of civilizations would be unthinkable without the constant interplay and exchange of such faculties of human thought and creativity as science, art and philosophy; nor would it be possible without the ethical and spiritual dimension. Women and young people can play a crucial part in the process of bridging and uniting the world.

7. As a crucial attempt to uphold mutual respect, sympathetic understanding and tolerance, the dialogue among civilizations is the only means to build a world of human dignity, solidarity and hope. Such a dialogue of multiple, pluralistic and communicating identities would result in a multi-civilizational universe of discourse. No civilization could be demonized, and references to all of them, their intellectual traditions and masterpieces of art would come to the contemporary individual as easily and naturally as references to his or her own civilization. A particular civilization can experience itself or critically examine its core values only through a dialogue with other civilizations.

8. All Governments and civil societies are enjoined, as an integrated part of their cultural policies, to take the initiative to further a dialogue among civilizations in such a way that it can become an instrument of transformation, a yardstick for peace and tolerance and a vehicle for diversity and pluralism, especially in culture, with the ultimate aim of furthering the common good.